

# Campus Announcement

July 20, 2021

## **Baruch College's Fall 2021 Reopening Plan Policies and Preparation for Our Safe Return to Campus**

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to announce a major milestone in the College's plan to reopen on-site campus operations beginning the week of August 2. The City University of New York approved Baruch College's [Fall 2021 Reopening Plan](#). I encourage you to review our new plan, posted in its entirety on the [Baruch Forward](#) website. The Fall 2021 plan incorporates the most recent City, State, and CDC guidelines and is designed to prioritize the health and safety of our community.

Many of the plan's provisions were touched upon last week at the [Summer Virtual Town Hall: Preparing for the Dress Rehearsal for the Future](#), which was hosted by President S. David Wu and attended by more than 450 faculty and staff members. I hope that the town hall—packed with lively discussion and an extensive Q&A session—answered many of your questions, addressed concerns, and helped reduce anxieties and build excitement for our return. I encourage you to watch or view once again the full [recording](#).

### **Highlights of the Fall 2021 Reopening Plan**

I would like to take this opportunity to address a few topics of greatest interest from the Virtual Town Hall and our approved plan.

#### **Covid-19 Vaccination: Policies and Guidelines**

Many of our protocols and procedures—building access, masking, and physical/social distancing guidelines—are dependent on an individual's vaccination status or for those who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated, results of a negative Covid-19 test taken within the last seven days.

**Access:** To access Baruch's buildings and facilities, you will be required to participate in the CUNY Surveillance Testing Protocol. Under this protocol, you must show results from a negative Covid-19 test taken within 7 days of entry. If you are fully vaccinated and provide valid documentation, such as an Excelsior Pass or CDC card, you will be exempt from this requirement. BCTC is partnering with CUNY to establish a process for validating vaccination status using our current access control system. We expect to provide more details shortly.

- The University is sunsetting the Everbridge Symptom Checker and replacing it with the CUNY Surveillance Testing Protocol. In the meantime, I encourage you to sign up for New York State's [Excelsior Pass](#), a free, fast, and secure way to present digital proof of Covid-19 vaccination. Otherwise, you will need to present documentation of your vaccination status.
- Public Safety officers will be located at entry points to check the status of individuals entering Baruch buildings.

**Masks:** The guidance regarding mask-wearing is dependent on the vaccination status of the individual.

- As a general rule, *vaccinated individuals* are not required to wear a mask while on campus; *unvaccinated individuals* or *those not fully vaccinated* must wear a mask covering their face and nose while on campus.
- Both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals, working alone in their offices, are not required to wear masks.
- Masks are not required outdoors (for example, on Baruch's Clivner=Field Plaza at 25th Street). However, the CDC recommends those who are *not vaccinated* or *not fully vaccinated* wear a mask in crowded outdoor settings.
- Masks will be available from Public Safety at the entrance of each building for anyone who wants or needs one.

**Physical/Social Distancing:** The CDC's guidance regarding physical distancing also depends on the vaccination status of the individual.

- *Vaccinated individuals* do not have to maintain physical distancing while on campus; *unvaccinated individuals* should continue to physically distance.
- Since students taking in-person classes are mandated to be vaccinated, social distancing will not be required in the classroom.
- Campus density is a factor in physical distancing protocols. With campus facilities operating at roughly 50 percent of normal capacity for Fall 2021, it is expected that campus density will be significantly reduced.

**CUNY's Student Vaccination Mandate:** CUNY's [student policy](#) will go a long way in creating a safe environment for us all. In short, the policy stipulates that:

- All CUNY students attending in-person and hybrid classes, and those living in a University residence hall, for the Fall 2021 semester are required to be vaccinated against Covid-19 (subject to final FDA vaccine approval).
- To access on-campus facilities and resources, students will have to show either proof of vaccination or a negative Covid-19 test result from the last seven days.

While Covid-19 vaccination is not mandated for faculty and staff, we continue to encourage members of the faculty and staff to be fully vaccinated. The single most important factor for a safe and healthy campus is a fully vaccinated campus community. For more information, support, and resources, please visit the University's comprehensive [#VaxUpCUNY](#) website.

### **Ventilation and Ventilation Systems**

Proper ventilation is an essential part of a healthy working environment and is especially important for mitigating Covid-19 infection rates. Baruch has been inspecting all ventilation systems and making any adjustments necessary to ensure they are functioning in accordance with CDC guidelines for safe occupancy. Here are some of the steps we have and continue to take:

- Stationary engineers, highly trained professionals focused on the care, maintenance, and operations of HVAC systems, are in charge of overseeing the College's ventilation systems. As essential workers, they have continued preventative maintenance programs throughout the pandemic and will continue their work throughout our on-site transition.
- Increased ventilation of outdoor air is a key. Most of Baruch's buildings—the Field Building at 17 Lexington Avenue is an outlier—have modern HVAC systems, which allow for maximized airflow from the outside. For 17 Lex, a multiplatform HVAC approach will be implemented that includes maximized airflow in the window units, HEPA filter units as needed, and the ability to open windows (previously prohibited for safety concerns) to a set stop of 4 to 6 inches.
- For the Annex Building, in which the College leases space, Buildings and Grounds has been working closely with the landlord and superintendent to ensure CDC guidelines are being met.

### **Healthy Facilities, Cleaning, and Disinfection**

Regular and enhanced cleaning and disinfection continue to be key components of our Safe Campus Reopening Plan. Baruch's Buildings and Grounds staff has been working since May—following frequently updated CDC recommendations—to prepare the campus for re-occupancy by deep cleaning all classrooms, workspaces, and common

areas. Specific procedures and protocols are being implemented as we transition to an in-person campus:

- A new, dedicated team of Covid Cleaners will prioritize enhanced cleaning of high-touch surfaces, such as turnstiles, light switches, and door handles, throughout the College campus.
- Restrooms will be cleaned twice daily. That regimen includes the use of new equipment—steam machines purchased for efficient, deep bathroom cleaning. Additionally, bathroom hand driers have been disabled, and the restrooms will be stocked with soap and paper towels.
- Individuals will be required to maintain their own workspaces, which will be supplied with multisurface spray cleaner and paper towels per CDC best practices.
- Signage promoting healthy practices, such as frequent hand washing and staying home when feeling ill, will be posted throughout campus.
- We will continue to monitor public health data on a regular basis and make adjustments to our protocols if needed.

### **Staying Connected: Updates in the Coming Weeks**

The Leadership Team and I will continue to reach out with real-time updates, which will be posted on the [Baruch Forward](#) website as well. Next week, I will email detailed step-by-step instructions for what to expect when you return to campus and how to access campus. Watch your Baruch inbox for this crucial message.

Thank you once again for your partnership, patience, resilience, and understanding throughout this process.

Sincerely,

Katharine T. Cobb

Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chair, Baruch College's Safe Campus Reopening Committee

**Baruch**  
COLLEGE

**CU** THE CITY  
**NY** UNIVERSITY  
OF  
NEW YORK